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PATIENT GRISSEL.

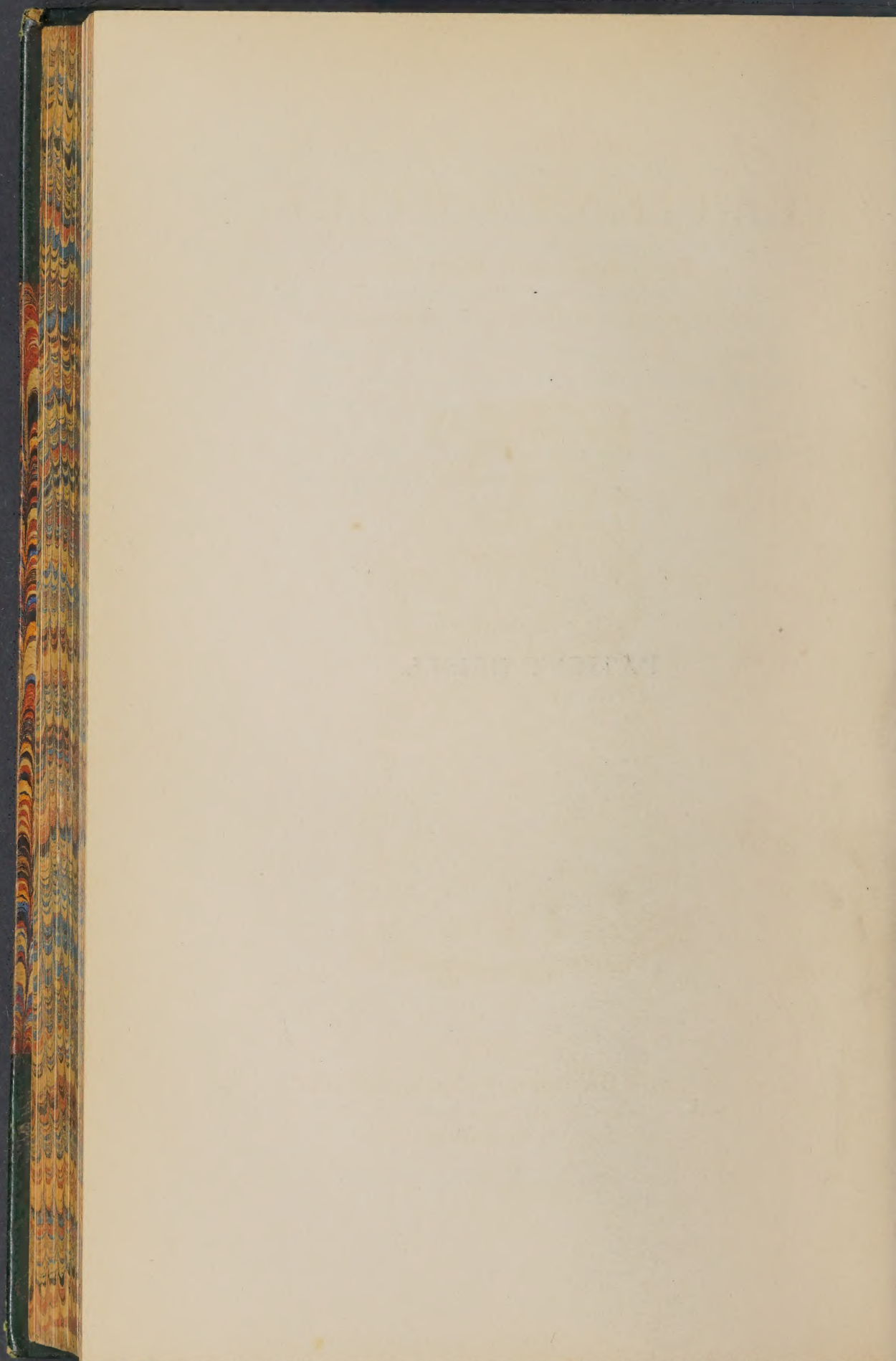












THE HISTORY OF
PATIENT GRISEL.

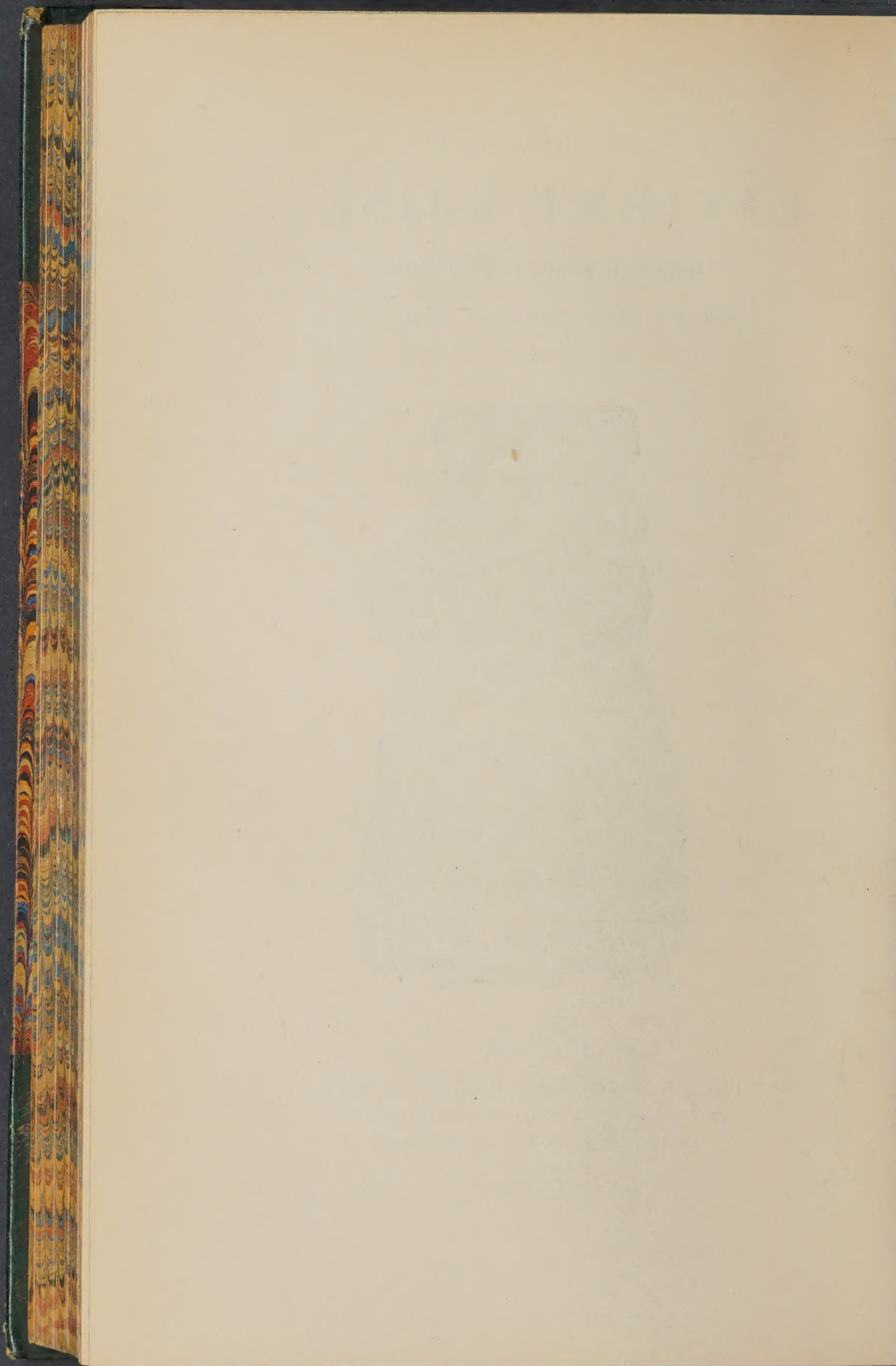
Two early Tracts in Black-letter.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES.



LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE PERCY SOCIETY,
BY T. RICHARDS, FOR THE EXECUTORS OF THE LATE
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MDCCCXLII.



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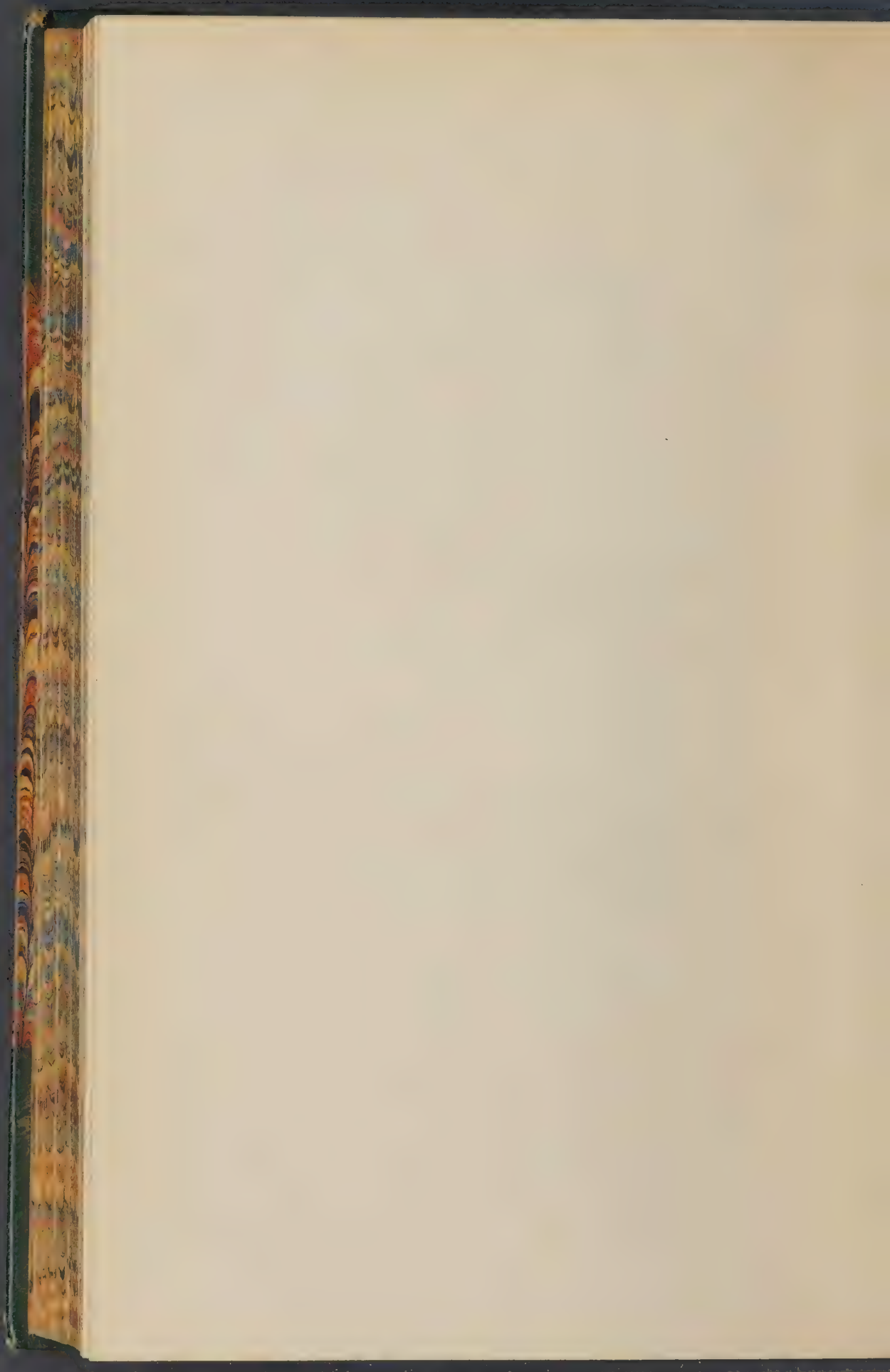
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INTRODUCTION.

OF the two tracts here reprinted no other copies, at least of so early a date, are known. "The admirable History of Patient Grisel" sold among the books of the Duke of Roxburgh, might be some later impression of "The ancient, true and admirable History of Patient Grisel," 4to. 1619, which comes first in our pages; and it appears to have been republished in 1703 under the title of "The History of the Marquess of Salus and Patient Grisel." Of the second tract, which is in the form of a small 8vo. chap-book, and intended for popular perusal, we find no trace in any catalogue. The wood-cut upon our title-page is a separate ornament at the back of what may be called the half-title of this small and curious work, and it represents Queen Elizabeth in her robes, wearing her crown, and sustaining her globe and sceptre. The date of this production has unfortunately

been cut away by some careless binder ; but it is not perhaps older than 1630, although it must have gone through many previous editions, from the period when the representation of the reigning queen would have been a very attractive ornament. It has also various other engravings of the same kind, but only one of them even of as much merit as that of which we present an accurate fac-simile.

It is most probable, though it is impossible to speak at all positively on the point, that both these productions, in black-letter, were originally printed before the year 1590. The last also came out as a broadside in black-letter, as "An excellent Ballad of a Noble Marquess and Patient Grissell," to the tune of "The Bride's Good-morrow," which was in fashion some years before the death of Elizabeth. The only copy we have seen of it was "printed by and for Alex. Milbourn, in Green-Arbor-Court in the Little Old-Baily," without date, but, as far as can be judged from the appearance of the type, after the Restoration. It includes only that part of our second tract which is in verse ; and it may be suspected that

the prose was originally inserted, and the ballad divided into chapters, at the instance of Wright, the stationer who published it, for the sake of giving the production greater bulk, novelty, and importance. We have carefully collated the chap-book and the broadside, and the result of that collation will be found in our notes.

It will be evident to those who read the two tracts with attention, that although the first professes to have been "written first in French," and the last to have been "translated out of Italian," both are in truth vernacular productions, the incidents only being derived either from one language or from the other.* The story, as our

* The manner in which the information is given upon the original title-page, that it was a translation from the French, is precisely as follows:

" Written first in French,
AND
*Therefore to French I speake and give direction,
For English Dames will live in no subjection.*
But now translated into English.
AND
*Therefore, say not so, for English maids and wives
Surpasse the French in goodnesse of their lives."*

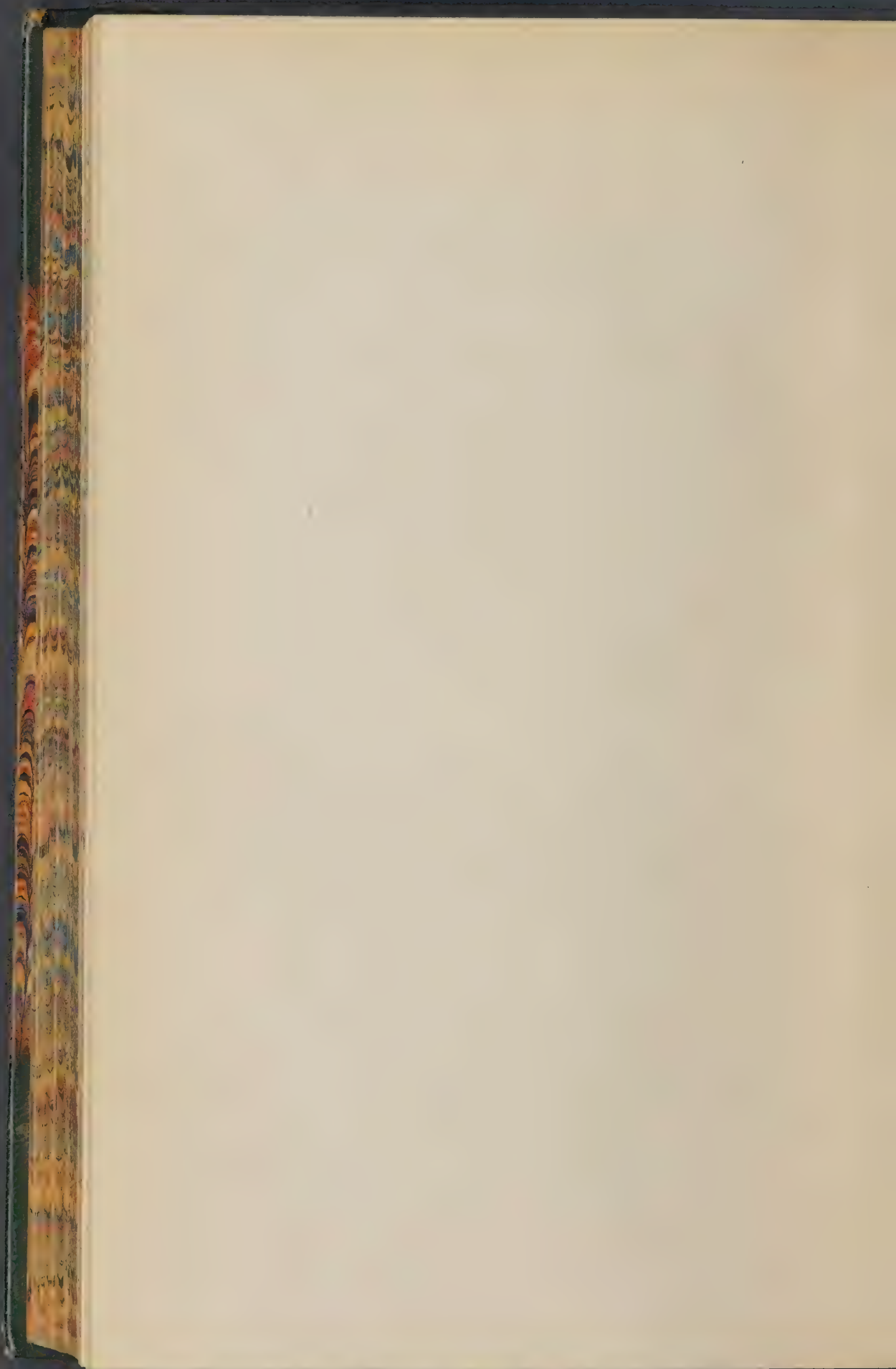
The size of our own title-page did not afford room for this sally of pleasantry, and we therefore add it here.

readers are aware, was first narrated in the Decameron of Boccaccio. Its earliest appearance in English was in Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," where it is assigned to the Clerk of Oxenford.

It is usually a difficult question to decide whether a popular history or a ballad were founded upon a play, or a play upon a popular history or ballad. That difficulty will probably not be so much felt in the present instance, and there is every reason to believe, from external and internal evidence, that the excellent drama by Dekker, Chettle, and Haughton, recently reprinted by the Shakespeare Society, under the title of "The pleasant Comodie of Patient Grissill," was very much derived from materials furnished in the ensuing pages. At all events, those materials must, we think, have been considerably anterior in point of publication. We may take this opportunity of supplying a slight omission in the preliminary matter to that reprint (and we are sure that we shall be thanked by the writer for doing so), where no notice is taken of an earlier English play upon the same story, by Ralph Radcliffe, of which however the title only "Patient Griselde,"

has come down to us. Radcliffe flourished towards the close of the reign of Henry VIII, and such particulars as are known of him may be found in Warton's "History of English Poetry," iii. 213, edit. 1824, and in Collier's "History of English Dramatic Poetry and the Stage," i. 117. John Bale, himself a well-known dramatic writer, is the authority from which the information is derived, and there can be no doubt of its correctness.

It was our intention at one time to have subjoined to these English versions the Latin translation by Petrarch of Boccaccio's novel, the incidents of which he in fact communicated to the author of the Decameron; but as it is printed among the works of Petrarch, and as there are also various separate publications of it, we have not thought it necessary to insert it. For every other information respecting the origin and progress of the story of Griselda in the languages of the different countries of Europe, we must refer our readers to the "Introduction" preceding the last publication of the Shakespeare Society.



THE
ANCIENT, TRUE AND ADMIRABLE
HISTORY OF
PATIENT GRISEL,

A Poore Mans Daughter in France :

SHEWING

HOW MAIDES, BY HER EXAMPLE, IN THEIR GOOD BEHAVIOUR
MAY MARRIE RICH HUSBANDS ;

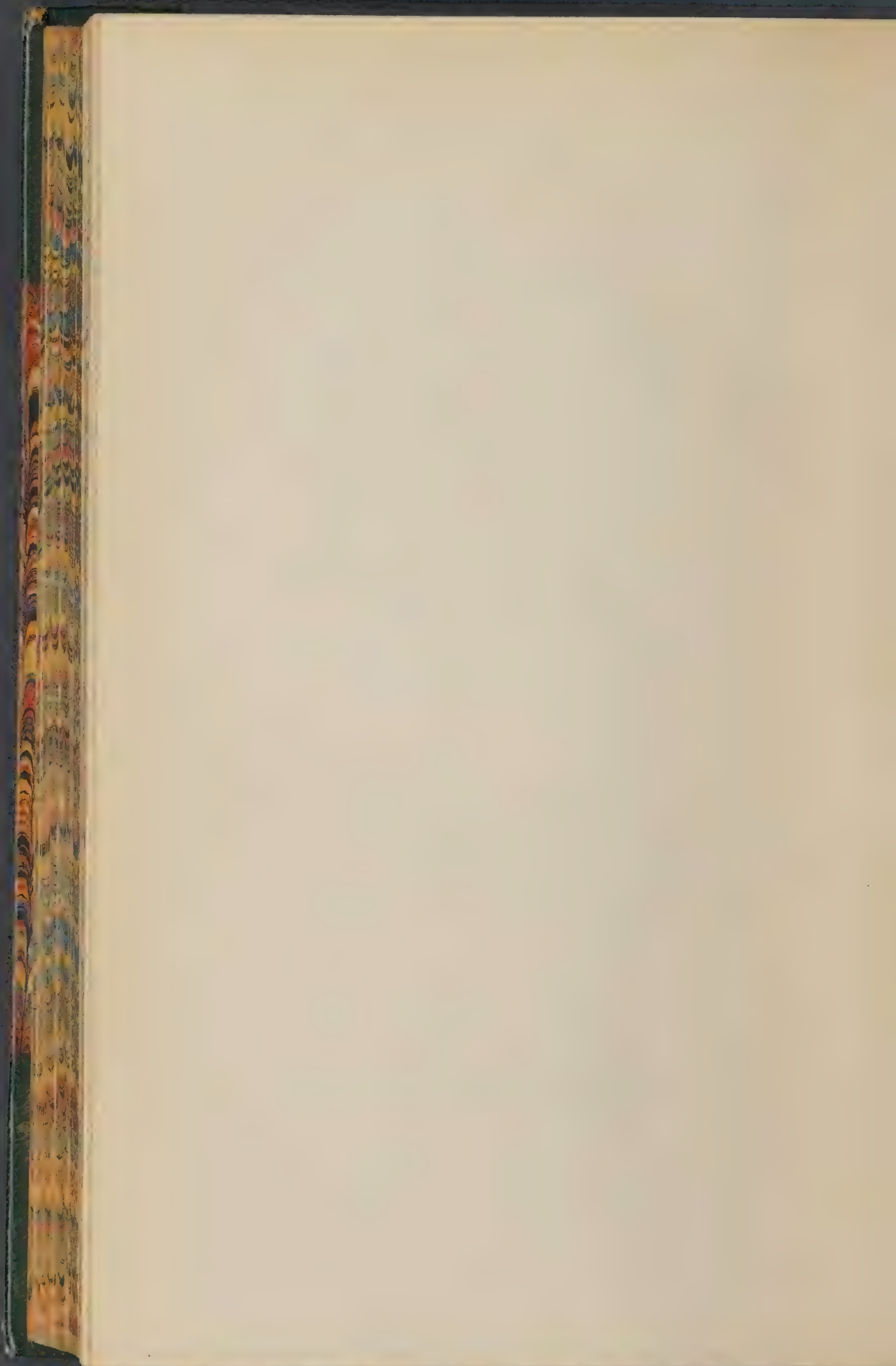
AND LIKEWISE WIVES BY THEIR PATIENCE AND OBEDIENCE
MAY GAIN MUCH GLORIE.

Written First in French, &c.

AT LONDON :

Printed by H. L. for William Lutter; and are to be sold at
his shop in Bedlem, neere Moore-Fields.

1619.



THE
HISTORIE OF PATIENT GRISEL, MADE MAR-
CHIONESSE OF SALUSS. IN WHICH IS EXEM-
PLIFIED THE TRUE OBEDIENCE AND NOBLE
BEHAVIOUR OF VERTUOUS WOMEN TOWARDS
THEIR HUSBANDS.

CHAP. I.

HOW THE MARQUESSE OF SALUSS PASSED THE TIME OF HIS
YOUTH WITHOUT ANY DESIRE OF MARIAGE, TILL HE WAS RE-
QUESTED BY THE FAIRE ENTREATIE OF A FAVORITE, AND OTHER
GENTLEMEN, TO AFFECT A WIFE; BOTH FOR THE GOOD OF THE
COUNTRY AND THE HONOUR OF HIMSELFE; WITH HIS ANSWER
TO THE SAME.

BETWEENE the mountaines of Italy and France,
towards the south, lyes the territory of Salus, a country
flourishing with excellent townes and castles, and
peopled with the best sort of gentles and peasants:
amongst whom there lived not long since a nobleman
of great hope and expectation, lord of the country, by
name, Gualter, Marquesse of Saluss; to whom, as the
government appertained by right of inheritance, so
their obedience attended by desert of his worthinesse.

He was young in yeeres, noble of lineage, and such attractive demeanor, that the best thought it a pleasure to bee commanded by him, and the worst grew more tractable by his good example: his delight was in hunting and hawking, and the pleasure of the time present extinguished the care of the time to come; for he thought not of mariage, nor to intangle himselfe with the inconveniences of a wife; till at last the people and noblemen of his country projected the contrary, as discontented to see him indisposed that way, and presaging a kind of prosperity to themselves, if by his mariage posteritie might arise, to assure them the better how they might bestow their obedience hereafter. Whereupon they assembled together, and made one day amongst the rest a determiner of their resolutions, choosing out for their speaker a noble knight of great authority, faire demeanor, eloquent speech, and more inward with the Marquesse then any of the rest; who, thus acquainted with all their mindes, and prepared to utter his owne minde, took an opportunity to acquaint the renowned Marquesse with the matter.

Most honourable Sir, the great humanity extended toward us, of which I most especially have participated, hath thus emboldened me above others, to make a further triall of your patience, and forbearing my rudenes: not that there is any sufficiency or singularity in me above others, but in that heeretofore I have found you so generous toward all, I make no question to finde you as gracious toward my selfe; and in that it hath pleased you to accept of our love, wee are proud againe

to be under your obedience ; wherein we shall rejoyce the more, if you now accord to our request the sooner, which is, to marry without delay. The time passeth, and will not be recalled ; your youth intreats it, and must not be denied ; your country importunes it, and would not bee opposed ; your neighbours desire it, and hope to bee satisfied ; and all sorts request it, and wish it for your honour ; for when age approacheth, death attends it at the heeles, and no man can tell when, or how it will fall upon him. Therefore wee humbly request you to accept our supplications, and accord to this importunity, that we may provide by your appointment a lady worthy of your honour and our subjection. In this wee are the more suppliant, because it will rebound so much to the good of your countrey, and the enlarging your renowne ; for if it should so fall out (which God forbid) that you die without issue, we may lament the losse of our lord, but not redresse the complaints of the people : we shall want you that was al our comfort, but are sure of distresse to our everlasting trouble. If then you either love your selfe, or pity us, frame a heart to this impression, and leave not us to further feare and disquiet.

When the noble lord had thus apprehended the petition of his loving subjects, he resolved to answer them as graciously as they had propounded the businesse with regard of duty, and so replied : My dearest friends, you have urged mee to a matter, in which as yet I have beene a mere stranger ; for by nature I delight in liberty, and by custome continued my plea-

suers, both which must needs bee curbed by mariage, and restrained by taking a wife: notwithstanding, I cast awaie all doubts to pleasure you, and will thinke of no incombrances so you be satisfied. For though mariage hath many difficulties attending; especially, the feare of legitimation in our children, and suspicion of that honour which lies on our wives honesty, yet all shall be overcome with this resolution, that I shall please you in the same; for I am resolved, if anie good come for mans contentment by mariage, it is from God, to whom I submit this cause, and pray for the good successe of your wishes, that I may live to maintaine your peace, as well as my owne pleasure: and look, wherein my contentment shall enlarge mine honour, your welfare shall be respected above my life; so that (beleeve it) I will satisfie your demands, and apply my selfe to the purpose. Only one thing I request at your hands; to take in worth my choice, and neither insult if she be a princesse of greatnes, nor repine if she be of meane estate; but love her because I have loved you, and regard her howsoever in that she is my wife; neither being curious nor inquisitive whom I will chuse, nor disaffected when it is past remedy.

When the company heard him out, and found him so willing to their satisfaction, they gave him thanks with one heart for his kinde admission, and answered with one tongue, he should not find them repugnant; but they would honor his wife as the princesse of the world, and be morigerous to him as the commander of their soules. Thus did this new report (like a mes-

senger of glad tidings) fill all the marquisate with joy, and the palace with delight, when they understood their lord would marry, and in a manner heard the time appointed; for presently it was proclaimed through the countrey, and a day assigned for all commers to come to the court. The nobles prepared themselves in the best manner: the ladies spared no cost, either for ornaments of their bodies, or setting out their beauties; the gentles flocked to please their lord, and were brave to set out their owne greatnes: the citizens were rich in their neatnes, and handsome in their attire: the officers were formall in their shoves, and sumptuous in their attendants: the countryman had his variety, and the verie peasant his bravery; in a word, al sorts gloried in the hope of that festivall, and every mans expectation attended the day of triumph. For never was such a preparation in Saluss before, nor such a confluence of people seene in that countrey; for besides the novelty, many forraine princes came to celebrate this marriage, and to shew their owne greatnes. Savoy was neare, and sent some from her snowie hills: France as neare, and sent others from her fruitful vines: Italy not far off, and sent many from her pleasant fields; and the ilands round about kept none at home that would come. Thus were his kinred invited, strangers admitted, his owne people entertained, and all sorts welcommed; but as yet no bride was seene, no woman named, no lady designed, no maid published, no wife knowne: onely the preparation was much, and the expectation greater.

All this while the Marquesse continued his hunting; and as he had accustomed, resorted much to a poore country village not farre from Salusse, where there dwelt as poore a countriman, named Janicole, overworne in yeares, and overcome with distresse. But as it happens many times that inward graces doe moderate outward discommodities, and that God seasoneth poverty with contentment and their sufficient supportation, so had this poore man all his defects supplied in the admirable comfort of one onely daughter, so composed, as if nature determined a worke of ostentation. For such was her beauty in appearance, and vertue in operation, that it put judicious men to an extasie in the choice by comparison; but both united did heere grace each other, and when they pretended an action, it was all to go forward to perfection. And whereas in others this temporary blessing gave wings to desire to bee seene and knowne abroad, in her those innated vertues allaied the heat of all manner of passion, and breakings out of frailty. The viands they had were but meane, and the diet they kept was to satisfie nature: the time was over-ruled by their stomacks, and the ceremonies they used were thanks to God, and moderation in their repasts. The utensiles of the house were homely, yet handsome in regard of their cleanlinesse: that bed which they had the ould man lay in, and the sweet daughter made shift with the ground. No day passed without prayers and praises to God, (for was it not praise-worthy to have such grace in this disgrace) nor any night without taking account of the day passed.

Her exercise was to helpe her father in the morning, and drive forth her sheep in the day time: hee was at home making of nets, and shee abroad looking to her lambs: she was never heard to wish for any better, but to thank God it was no worse. No word of repining ever came from her mouth, or the least grudge from her heart: at night she folded her sheep and dressed her fathers supper, then lay they downe to rest, and rested as well as in a bed of downe indeed. This was the glory of their poverty, and memory of their contentment.

But as fire will not be hid where there is matter combustible, so vertue will not be obscured where there be tongues and eares; nor could the Marquesse so hallow after his hawks and hounds, but report hallowed in his eare as fast this wonderment; inso-much that when it was confirmed by judicious relation, he made it not dainty to be behoulding to his owne experience: which when he saw concurring with fame, the miracle brought a kinde of astonishment; which continuing, the properties of such novelties, increased to meditation: and so comparing the rest with this rarity, he thought her a fit woman to make his wife, supposing that if she were vertuous by nature, she would not prove vicious by education; but rather as a diamond is a stone of the same value whether set in lead or horne, it must needs be of more excellency embellished with gold and enamell. In which resolution hee prepared his heart, and went forward with his businesse.

In the meane time the Court was daintily furnished, the plate prepared, the apparell magnificent, the coronet rich, the jewels precious, the ornaments exceeding, and all things befitting the magnificence of a prince, and the dignitie of a queen: only the nobles wondred, the ladies were amazed, the damsell marvelled, the gentles disputed, the people flocked, and all sorts attended to see who should possesse this wealth, and bee adorned with these robes. Till at last the nuptial day came indeed: honour prepared the sumptuousnes; fame divulged the glory; Hymen invited the guests; magnificence adorned the roomes: the officers marshald the state, and all looked for a bride; but who she was, the next chapter must discover.

CHAP. II.

HOW, AFTER ALL THIS GREAT PREPARATION, THE MARQUESSE OF SALUSS DEMANDED GRISELL OF HER POORE FATHER JANICOLA; AND, ESPOUSING HER, MADE HER MARCHIONESSE OF SALUSS.

WHEN all things were extended to this glorious shew, the Marquesse (as if he went to fetch his wife indeed) tooke with him a great company of earls, lords, knights, squires, and gentlemen, ladies and attendants, and went from the palace into the countrey toward Janicolas house; where the faire mayd Grisel, knowing nothing of that which hapned, nor once dreaming of

that which was to come, had made her house and selfe somewhat handsome, determining (with the rest of her neighbor virgins) to see this solemnity: at which instant arrived the Marquesse with all his gracious company, meeting with Grisel as shee was carrying two pitchers of water to her poore fathers house. Of whom (calling her by her name) he asked, where her father was? she humbly answered, in the house. Goe then, said hee, and tell him I would speak with him. So the poore old man (made the poorer by this astonishment) came forth to the lord somewhat appauled, till the Marquesse, taking him by the hand, with an extraordinary chearefulnesse said, that he had a secret to impart unto him; and so, sequestering him from the company, spake these words:—Janicola, I know that you alwaies loved me, and am resolved that you doe not now hate me: you have been glad when I have been pleased, and will not now bee sorrowful, if I bee satisfied: nay, I am sure, if it lie in your power, you will further my delight, and not bee a contrary to my request. For I intend to begge your daughter for my wife, and bee your sonne in lawe for your advancement. What saiest thou, man? wilt thou accept mee for a friend, as I have appointed thee for a father?

The poore ould man was so astonished, that he could not looke up for teares, nor speak a word for joy; but when the extasie had end, hee thus faintly replied:—My gracious soueraigne, you are my lord, and therefore I must accord to your will; but you are generous, and therefore I presume on your vertue: take her a Gods

name, and make mee a glad father ; and let that God, which raiseth the humble and meek, make her a befitting wife, and fruitful mother.—Why then, replied the Marquesse, let us enter your house, for I must ask her a question before you. So hee went in, the company tarrying without in great astonishment : the faire maid was busied to make it as handsome as she could, and proud againe to have such a guest under her rooffe ; amazed at nothing, but why hee should come so accompanied, and little conjecturing of so great a blessing approaching. But, at last, the Marquesse took her by the hand, and used these speeches :—To tell you this blush becomes you, it were but a folly ; and that your modesty hath graced your comelines, may prove the deceit of words, and unbecfitting my greatnes ; but in a word, your father and I have agreed to make you my wife, and I hope you will not disagree to take me to your husband. For delay shall not intangle you with suspicion, nor two daies longer protract the kindnes ; onely I must bee satisfied in this, if your heart afford a willing entertainment to the motion, and your vertue a constancy to this resolution, not to repine at my pleasure in any thing, nor presume on contradiction, when I determine to command. For as amongst good souldiers, they must simply obey without disputing the businesse : so must vertuous wives dutifully consent withoute reproofe, or the least contraction of a brow. Therefore be advised how you answer, and I charge you take heed, that the tongue utter no more then the heart conceits. All this while Grisel

was wondring at the miracle, had not religion told her, that nothing was impossible to the commander of all things; which reduced her to a better consideration, and thus brought forth an answer.

My gracious lord, I am not ignorant of your greatness, and know mine owne basenesse: there is no worth in me to be your servant, therefore there can be no desert to be your wife: notwithstanding, because God will be the author of miraculous accidents, I yeeld to your pleasure, and praise him for the fortune; onely this I will be bold to say, that your will shall be my delight, and death shall be more welcome unto mee, then a word of displeasure against you.

This is sufficient, answered the great lord, and so most lovingly he took her by the hand, and brought her to the company; even before all his peeres and great ladies, and told them she should bee his wife, so that wherein they extended their love, reverence, and obedience toward her, he could exemplifie his regard, care, and diligence toward them. And because outward shewes doe sometimes grace befitting actions, (lest her poverty and basenes might too much daunt their expectation, and seeme disgratious to their noblenes) he commanded them with a morall livenessse to adorne her with the richest robes they had; so that it was a pleasure to see how the ladies bestird themselves, a delight to behould the severall services performed, the many hands about her, the jewels and pendants, the robes and mantles, the ornaments and coronets, the collanaes and chaines, with all other particulars

and accoustrements; but when she was apparelled indeed, it was a ravishment exceeding report, and they which stomached her preferment, were now delighted with her glory. Such a benefit hath beauty by nature, and graciousnesse by nurture.

CHAP. III.

HOW THE MARQUESSE AND GRISEL WERE MARRIED TOGETHER.

AFTER the ladies had thus adorned poore Grisel with robes befitting her estate, the Marquesse and all the noble company returned to Saluss, and in the Cathedrall Church, in sight of the people, according to the fulnesse of religious ceremonies, they were espoused together, and with great solemnitie returned to the palace. Herein yet consisted the admiration, that no word of reproach was murmured, nor eie looked unpleasantly upon her; for by her wonderfull demeanour shee had gained so much of opinion, that the basenes of her birth was not thought upon, and all her graces concurring made them verely beleeve, shee was extracted of princely lineage: no man once supposed that shee could be Grisel, daughter to poore Janicola, but rather some creature metamorphosed by the powers of heaven: for besides the outward statelinesse and majestical carriage of herselfe, the wonderfull modestie and exact symmetry of her coun-

tenance, the admirable beauty and extraordinary favor of her visage, her faire demeanour had a kinde of attraction, and her gracious words a sweet delivery; so that all that came to her were glad of their accesse, and they which went from her triumphed for their good speed: yea, report extended so far, that she was not onely visited by her owne lords and ladies with reverence, but attended on with strangers, who came from all quarters to see her and to bee behoulding to their owne judgements; so that if the Marquisse loved her before for her own worth, he now revered her for others respect; the rather, because he found a blessing attending her presence, and all people pleased in the contract. For when any controversie hapned betweene himselfe and his nobles, she was so nobly minded, that what she could not obtaine by fair intreaty, she yet mitigated by sweet perswasion. When any unkindnes hapned of forraine prince, shee urged those blessings of peace, and reasoned the matter with delightsom enforcement; and when the people were either complained of, or against, he marvelled from whence she had those pretty reasons to asswage his anger, and they verely beleaved shee was sent from heaven for their releefe. Thus was shee amiable to her lord, acceptable to her people, profitable to her country, a mirror of her sexe, a person privileged by nature, and a wonder of the time, in which she did nothing out of time; so that the Marquisse was rather ravished than loving, and all his subjects resolved to obedience from her good example.

CHAP. IV.

HOW THE LADY GRISEL WAS PROVED BY HER HUSBAND,
WHO THUS MADE TRIALL OF HER PATIENCE.

To other blessings, in processe of time, there was added the birth of a sweet infant, a daughter, that rejoiced the mother, and gladdened the father: the country triumphed, and the people clapped their hands for joy; for the Marquesse still loved her more and more, and they thought their lives not deere for her, if occasion served. Notwithstanding all this, Fortune hath still a tricke to checke the pride of life, and prosperity must be seasoned with some crosses, or else it would taint and corrupt us too much: where-upon, the Marquesse determined now to prove his wife, and make triall of her vertues indeed; and so taking a convenient season, after the childe was fully weaned, he one day repaired secretly to her chamber, and (seeming halfe angry) thus imparted his mind.

Although, Grisel, this your present fortune hath made you forget your former estate, and that the jollity of your life overswayeth the remembrance of your birth, yet neither is it so with me, nor my nobles; for I have some occasion of distasting, and they great cause of repining, in that they must be subject to one so base, and have still before their eyes our children of such low degree; so that though (for my sake) they make good semblance of the

present, yet are they resolved never to suffer any of our posterity to rule over them; of which, as they have disputed with mee, I cannot chuse but forewarne you. Therefore, to prevent this discontentment betweene us, and to maintaine that peace which must corroborate my estate, I must needes yeelde to their judgements, and take away your daughter from you, to preserve their amity: the thing I know must be displeasing to nature, and a mother cannot well indure such a losse; but there is now no remedy: only make use of your first resolutions, and remember what you promised me at the beginning of our contract.

The lady, hearing this sorrowfull preamble, and apprehending the Marquesse resolution, to her griefe, (although every word might have beene as arrowes in her sides) yet admitting of the temptation, and disputing with herselfe to what end the vertues of patience, modesty, forbearance, fortitude, and magnanimity were ordained, if they had not subjects to worke upon, and objects to looke after, thus replied.

My lord, you are my soveraigne, and all earthly pleasures and contentments of my life come from you, as the fountaine of my happinesse; and therefore please your selfe, and (beleeve it) it is my pleasure you are pleased: as for the child, it is the gift of God, and yours. Now he that gives may take away, and as wee receive blessings from heaven, so must we not dote on them on earth, lest by setting our minds too much upon them, wee cannot set off our hearts when they are taken from us: only one thing I desire, that

you remember I am a mother ; and if I burst not out into passion for her losse, it is for your sake I am no more perplexed, and so you shall ever find mee a wife befitting your desires.

When the Marquesse saw her constancy, and was in a manner pleased with her modest answere, hee replied not at all at that time ; for his heart was full, and what betweene joy and feare he departed ; joy that so great vertue had the increase of goodnesse, feare that he had presumed too farre on such a trial. But resolved in his businesse, hee went to put it to the adventure.

CHAP. V.

THE MARQUESSSE SENT A VARLET FOR HIS DAUGHTER ; BUT PRIVATLY DISPOSED OF HER WITH HIS SISTER, THE DUTCHESSSE OF BOLOGNA DE GRACE, WHO BROUGHT HER UP IN ALL THINGS BEFITTING THE CHILDE OF SO GREAT A PERSON.

Not long after this sad conference between the Marquesse and his lady, hee called a faithfull servant unto him ; such a one as the poet talks of, *propter fidem et taciturnitatem dilectum*, to whom hee imparts this secrecy, and with severall instructions, what hee truly meant to do with the child, sent him to his wife with an unsavory message, which yet hee delivered in this manner.

I had not now come to you, most noble lady, though that power commanded me which hath my life in subjection, if I had not more relied upon your wisdom and vertue, than feared death it selfe. Therefore I crave pardon if I am displeasing in my message, and seeme cruell (as it were) in tearing your flesh from your sides, by bereaving you of this your daughter: for hee hath appointed it that must not bee gainsaid, and I am a messenger that cannot bee denied. But yet with what unwillingnes (God knowes my soule) in regard that you are so respected amongst us, that wee think of nothing but what may delight you, and talk not a word but of your merit and worthinesse.

When she had heard him out, remembring the conference the Marquesse had with her, and apprehending there was no disputing in a matter remediable, especially with a messenger, shee resolved it was ordained to dy; and although shee must now (as it were) commit it to a slaughter-house, whereby any woman in the world might with good becoming have burst out into some passion, and well enough shewed a distracted extasie, yet recollecting her spirits, and reclaiming those motives of nature already striving in her bowels, shee tooke the childe in her armes, and with a mothers blessing and sweetned kisses, the countenance somewhat sad, and the gesture without any violent excruciation, delivered it unto the fellow, not once amazed or distempred, because her lord would have it so, and shee knew not how

to have it otherwise: only she said, I must, my friend, intreat one thing at your hands, that out of humanity and Christian observation, you leave not the body to bee devoured of beasts or birds; for it is worthy of a grave in her innocency, and Christian buriall, though shee were but my daughter alone.

The fellow having received the childe, durst not tarry for feare of discovery, (such impression had her words made already) but returned with it to his maister; not leaving out the least circumstance of her answer, nor any thing that might enlarge her renowne and constancy.

The Marquesse, considering the great vertue of his wife, and looking on the beauty of his daughter, began to enter into a kinde of compassion, and to retract his wilfulnesse; but at last resolution won the field of pity, and having (as he thought) so well begunne, would not so soone give over, but with the same secrecy hee had taken her from his wife, hee sent it away to his sister, the Dutchess of Bologna, with presents of worth, and letters of gratification, containing in them the nature of the businesse, and the manner of her bringing up: which she accordingly put in practice, receiving her neece with joy, and instructing her with diligence; so that it soone appeared under what a tutelage shee was, and whose daughter shee might be. For her pregnancy learned whatsoever they taught her, and the grace she added, quickly discovered that honour had confederated with nature to make her the offspring of such a mother.

CHAP. VI.

THE MARQUESSE, NOT CONTENTED WITH THIS PROOFE, TOOKE
AWAY ALSO HER SONNE, IN WHICH ADVERSITY (WITH OTHER
ADDITIONS) SHE SHEWED AN EXTRAORDINARY PATIENCE.

AFTER this tempest was overpast, the rage whereof might easily have broken the tender sides of poore Grisels barke, (for shee verely beleaved that her daughter was slaine) the Marquesse still lay in waite for the trial of his wife, watching every opportunity which might acquaint him with her discontentments; especially if he might understand whether she complained of his rigorousnesse and unkindnesse, or no: but when he not only was advertised of her constancy and faire demeanour, but saw (by experience) that shee was neither elated in prosperity, nor dejected in adversity; when hee perceiued so great a temperature betweene the joy of her advancement and the sorrow for her trouble, he wondred at her constancy: and the rather, because her love and observation toward him continued with that sweetnes, and had such delectable passages, that his heart was set on fire againe, and hee knew not how to allay the extremities of his joy. In this manner passed foure yeeres, wherein she overpassed all of her kinde, and he thought it a donative from heaven to have such a wife. At last nature bestird herselfe againe, and made her a happy mother of a faire sonne; the joy whereof led the whole country into the house

of praier and thanksgiving, and brought them home againe by cresset-light and bonfires, so that she well perceived how acceptable she was to her people and beloved of her husband. Notwithstanding, with the same water that drave the mill hee drowned it, and made her still beleieve the contrary; for after two yeeres, that the childe was past the danger of a cradle, and the trouble of infancy, he tooke occasion once againe to inflict upon the vertuous Grisel a new punishment, erecting his building upon the old foundation.

You knowe, saith hee, what former contentions I have had with my nobility about our marriage; not that they can lay any imputation on you or your worthy behavior, but on my fortune and disasterous affection to match myselfe so meanly: wherein yet their forward exprobatation was rebated, all the while we either had no children, or that they supposed that which we had to be taken from us; all which ariseth out of the error of ambition (which in a manner is carelesse of vertue) respecting nothing but a high progeny. So that ever since this child was borne, there hath passed many secret grudgings, and unkinde speeches against it, as if it were a disparagement to their greatnesse, to have a lord of so meane parentage, and the country to be subject to the grand child of Janicola, whom you see never since our mariage they would admit to place of honor, or to overtop them by way of association, nor will suffer this my Gualter, though it carry the fathers name, to rule over them. Therefore, to allay the heat of these present fires, and to preserve the peace of my

estate (by preventing the mischief of future troubles) I am resolved to settle my contentment, and to deale with your sonne as I have dealt with your daughter. And of this I thought it good to advertise you, as a preparative for patience, lest sorrow should distract you with oversuddenesse.

Now you ladies and dames of these times, that stand upon tearmes of spirit and greatnesse of heart, (some will have it courage and magnanimity of minde) that are affrighted at the character of a foole, and silly poore soule; I speake not of strumpets, or of such as are willing to brand themselves with the impurity of uncleannesse, and dare out of impudency or cunning, tell their husbands to their faces they will go where they list, and do what they please, but of such that under that impregnable target of honestie are yet so impatient at every distemperature, that they dare answer taunt for taunt: yea, like viragoes indeed, offer the first blow, though a horrible confusion follow; what would you have answered this lord? or with what fire-works would you have made your approches unto him? I will not tarry for your answere, lest I pull the old house in peeces, and so, though I scape the timber, I may be crushed with the rubbish; but I will now anticipate (or prevent) all objections by telling you what faire Grisel said: and if there bee hope of reformation, insert it as a caution, to divert you from your naturall fierceness.

When shee had heard him out, though to the griefe of her soule, she conceived the murther of her childe,

and that the apprehension renewed the sorrow of her daughter's losse; yet would shee give no way to such distemperature, that either hee should have cause to suspect her patience, or shee herselfe the temptation of disquiet, and therefore thus replied:—My lord, I have many times told you, that my soule rejoiceth in nothing but in your reposednes, for you are the lord of me and this infant; and though I could bee contented to shew myselfe a mother in his education, and bring him now and then unto you as the pledge of our loves, yet are you the commander of my vowes, and I will rectifie all disordered appetites by the rule of your pleasure. Take him then, a Gods name, and if hee be marked for death, it is but the common brand of all creatures; nay, if the mother may be a sacrifice of propitiation to appease your disquiet, never was lamb so meek, nor holocaust so willing to bee offred. For, what may bee comprehended under the titles of father, kinred, children, friends, life, pleasure, honours, and contentment are all comprised under your love, and the society of a husband. Do with mee, then, what you please: the body shall serve your turne while it lives, and the soule attend you after death.

Here was an answer to pacifie the tyrants of Sicilie, and put a man quite out of his tract of proving such a wife! yet the Marquesse onely made use of it to rejoice in the assurance of her goodnes, and went the rather forward in his dangerous course of temptation.

CHAP. VII.

THE MARQUESSE, RESOLUTE TO PROVE HIS WIFE FURTHER,
SENDETH FOR HIS SON, AND DISPOSETH OF HIM AS HE HAD
DONE OF HIS DAUGHTER.

As this patient and wonderfull lady was one day sporting with her infant, like an untimely tempest (spoiling the beauty of some new rooted plants) did this messenger of death interpose himselfe betweene her recreation, making the hollow demand of her sonne worse than the noise of a schrich-owle over a sick mans bed: yet, (as if there were a conscience in disquieting her greatnes, or if you will, her goodnes) he came forward with preambles and apologies, insinuating, with craving pardon, the authority of a lord, the duty of a servant, the terrour of death, the circumstance of obedience, and all other enforcements which might either excuse a messenger, or make the message of it selfe without blame. What should I enlarge a discourse of terrour? it is a curtesie to conclude a mischief with quicknes. Hee was not so sudden in his demand, as shee was ready in her dispatch, for she presently blest the child, kissed it, crossed it, adorned it, and delivered it to the executioner; onely with the same enforcement shee pleaded, as shee had spoken of in the behalfe of her daughter, not to see it perish for lack of a buriall, or devoured for want of a grave.

In this manner, and with this report, hee returned to his lord, who had still more cause of amazement, and lesse reason to trouble such a creature, had not his wilfulness put him forward to make an end of his businesse, and taught him still variety of trying this gold in the fire. But for the time hee sent likewise this childe to his sister, the Duchesse of Bologna, (yet some will have her but Countesse of Paniche) who, understanding her brothers minde, brought up both these children in such a fashion, that though no man knew whose children they were, yet they imagined whose they might bee; that is, the son and daughter of some prince, or other potentate, willing to have his children brought up to the best purpose, and befitting their birth and honour.

The ordering of this businesse in this sort made the Marquesse once againe settle himselfe in Saluss, where hee kept open house to all comers, and was proud of nothing so much as the honour of his wife, and the love of his people: for although he had thus tried her patience and constancy, giving her more than sufficient cause of anguish and perturbation, yet could he not finde fault, or had the least demonstration of offence, but still she loved him more and more, and was so observingly dutifull and cautelous of displeasure, that many times he grew enamored of that he might command, and seemed passionate in the distractions of over-joy. Nor could the length of time make this love wearisome, for all they had lived thus a dosen yeares together; onely shee got the hand of

him in the opinion of the people, who by this time beganne to whisper against his unkindnes, that had married so vertuous a woman, and bereaved her of two children; so that if they were slaine, it was a murther, if otherwise, it was unkindnesse. For though shee were poore Janicolas daughter by birth, yet she might come from heaven for her vertue, and was sure to go thither for her piety. Notwithstanding these breakings out, which came often to the eares of his honour, such was her moderation and his government, that they only whisperd the same in her behalfe, and contented themselves with the expectation of future good, as they had the fruition of present happinesse, not meddling with the same further, than in the commiseration of her, and still acknowledging their duty to him; so that although hee knew shee might this way understand his former reasons of taking away her children, that it was but a device, and that there were some other motives, which procured this unkindnes, yet was he still obstinate to exercise her patience, and conceit beat out another plot of offence on the anvill of a loving, yet most hardned heart.

CHAP. IX.

THE MARQUESSE, TO TRY HIS LADY FURTHER, MADE HER
BELEEVE HEE WOULD MARRY ANOTHER WIFE.

SOME dozen years were passed since the Marquesse of Saluss had sent his daughter to Bologna, to his sister, (as you have heard) who was by this time growne to that beautie, comelinesse, and perfection, that her fame busied all Europe; and the lady Grisel, her mother, was made acquainted with her excellency, whereupon, he very strangely sent to Rome, by a messenger of trust, for counterfeit letters to marrie his paragon, and to bee dispensed from his first wife. . Which was so effectually dispatched, that the messenger soone returned with the approbation of his request, and hee himselfe had many allegations in readinesse to excuse the matter, intimating the good of the countrie, and the continual desire of his people for the alteration: which, although it was far from probability, because they pitied their ladies distresse, and rather repined against their lords inconstancy, yet it served his turne for the time, and he thereupon erected the frame of this second marriage. By this time is the faire Grisel acquainted with the businesse, and troubled at the misfortune; but having many times plaied the wanton with affliction, she ressettled herself to endure whatsoever should be imposed; so that when she came to the prooffe, indeed,

nothing affronted her constancy, nor humbled her lower then her own vertue had taught her the way.

In the mean while, the Marquesse had under hand sent to the Count of Paniche and his sister, to bring him his children with all the pompe and glory they could prepare; with caution, not to discover their names, and to be at a day appointed at Saluss: so that it passed for current all over the country, that a lady, a yong, brave, and gallant lady, of great lineage, and greater worth, of high renown and mighty affinity, was comming into Saluss to be espoused to the Marquesse, and that they were already come out of Bologna de Grace, a whole dayes journey forward, with such a troope and company that it was a shew of magnificence, and a spectacle of delight. For amongst the rest, there was a young lord, not fully eight yeere old, whose bravery and gallantnesse drew all mens eyes with admiration toward him, had not the lady divided the gazing, and shared with their opinion. For, besides her riches and outward ornaments, her youth, (as not fully thirteene) and upright comelinesse, her bewty and gracious behauieur, she was of extraordinary stature, and majestike presence.

These things thus disposed and handsomely carried, the Marquesse tooke an opportunity thus to speak to the disconsolate Grisel before all his people. In times past, I confesse, you deserved my love, and notwithstanding the disparity betweene us, I thought it well bestowed upon you; nay, I cannot now impute any ill desert unto you: notwithstanding, for some reasons to

my selfe best knowne, of which I have made the holy father acquainted, I am resolved to take another wife; who, as you heare, is on the way hitherward already: wherefore I would advise you to retire to your fathers cotage, till you heare further from me.

Alas! my lord, replied the sweet soule, I ever disputed the matter with reason, that there was no equality betweene so great magnificence and my humiliation, and in the greatest assurance of my prosperity, reputed my selfe a vassaile and handmaid, proud of nothing but my owne readinesse to be at your command, and your willingnes to employ mee in your affaires; so that, I take God to my witnes, I scarce trusted my selfe with the name of a wife, when I was in the best assurance. Therefore, I must acknowledge what you have heere-tofore vouchsafed as a part of great bounty, and the very fruits of your generousnes. As for returning to my poore father's house, I am most willing; and there, as you please, like a forlorne widow will spend the rest of my dayes; yet remember I was your wife, espoused orderly, and you have had children by mee, so that if I there dye, I must yet dye the widow of such a lord, and for honors sake be so reputed. As for your new spouse, God grant her many daies of comfort, and you many yeeres of joy, that you may live in reciprocall delight one with another, and intertaine no worse contentment than poore Grisel accustomed. As for my dowry I brought, I brought only my selfe, and will have no more back againe, which was, faith, love, reverence, poverty and virginity; for, as I came naked from my

fathers house, I am contented to return so againe. Your jewels are in the wardrobe, and even the ring you married mee withal, in the chamber: of this I weare, I shall quickly be disrobed, and if there be any further misery appointed, my patience can endure it, if your pleasure impose it; onely in recompence of my virginitie, I request a poore smocke to hide that wombe from public overlooking, that was once so private to so great a prince; and because it was the bed of your infants, let it not bee the scorne of your people, but give mee leave thus to goe out of the palace, that hereafter times may wonder, how quietly a woman yeelded to so great a change. Nay, let no man shed a teare, I must bee more naked than so, for though the wife of a Marquesse while I lived, and the widow when I died, yet am I not too good for a grave, but in despight of pride must return to dust and ashes.

Did I say before, they began to weep? I can assure you, when she had done, they roared out-right; yea, the Marquesse himselfe shed so many teares, that he was faine to retire, and commanded the smock she had begged to be sent unto her, that shee might prosecute the enterprize, and he determine his businesse, as he had constantly projected.

CHAP. VIII.

HOW THE PATIENT GRISEL WAS DISROBED OF HER APPARELL,
AND RESTORED ALL SHE HAD (EXCEPT ONE POORE SMOCKE)
TO THE MARQUESS.

BEFORE I proceed any further in this wonderfull discovery, I am sure two things will bee objected against mee: first, the impossibility of the story, secondly, the absurdity of the example. For the story I answer, that therefore it was thus published and connected together, for the rarity of the businesse, and the sweetnesses of the successe, nor is it any way stranger than many Roman passages, and Grecian discourses. For the application, it is both necessary and befitting; for whereas in the condition of women, amongst many other, there bee two especiall errorrs against the modesty of their sex, and quietnes of their husbands, videlicet, superiority, and desire of liberty, (I name not irregular behaviour, household inconveniences, and domesticks strife) this one example (as Hercules did the serpents) strangles them both in the cradle, and though it cannot prevent, yet will it exprobrate the fault. First concerning superiority, I hope the instances of scripture are not made canonicall to no purpose, and out of reason and naturall inforcement: what a filthinesse is it to a generous spirit, to have a woman so presumptuous as to take an account of her husbands actions and businesse? wherein many times they are

so peremptory, that I have seene them enter the rooms of privacy, where secret businesses of strangers have been imparted, and were to be discussed, nor hath this been done with a lovely insinuation, or cunning excuse of longing, or willingness to be instructed, or other pretty inducements to permission, but with a high commanding voice, and impudent assurances of their owne worth: 'yea, I have knowne them breake open letters before they came to their husbands overlooking, and have wondred even at souldiers themselves, that would give way to such undecency. Againe to be counter-checked in this wilfulness, what clamours have beene raised! what tumults and discomforts occasioned! that instead of awful obedience and delightsome affability, they have burst out into outrageousnes, commanded teares of mischeife, and threatned suspicious revenges. But let them soile themselves in the filthinesse of this humour never so much, I say plainly, that though their husbands were fooles by nature, yet is it not befitting for a wife to discover the same, or over-rule in forren affaires, I meane matters which concerne them not: for there is no great man so weake, but hath councill and supportation of inferior officers, nor mean man so sottish, but hath friends or servants in the dispatch of his businesse. Secondly, concerning the desire of liberty: oh, hellish device of the divell, and fearefull custome both of France and England! I hope he that knowes the fashions of the East, of Muscovy, Spain, Italy, and the Mores, understands that no married wife goes abroad but to honorable purposes; and it is an

introduction to death, to salute any stranger, or be seene in private conference. For, in true understanding, what businesse should any man have with my wife three houres together in private? or why, without my leave, and that upon good grounds, should shee wander in publike? I speake not to overthrow noble societies, generous intertainment, familiar invitations, curteous behaviour, charitable welcomes, honest recreations, or peradventure, the imparting of private businesse; but meerly against foppish wantonnesse, idle talke, suspicious meetings, damnable play-hunting, disorderly gaming, unbefitting exercises, and in a word, all such things as tend to obscenity and wickednes: in which (say what women can) if there be not a moderation by nature, there must be an inforcement by judgement; and that woman that will not be ruled by good counsell, must be overruled by better example,—of which, this now in hand (of Lady Grisel) is a mirror, and transparent chrysell to manifest true vertue, and wifely duty indeed; and so I come to the wonder of her obedience.

After the Marquesse was resolved to the last act of her tryall, and had sent her the smocke shee demanded, amongst all the lords, knights, ladies and other company, she presently disrobed her selfe, and went, so accompanied, from the palace to her fathers cottage, who as you have heard (for divers reasons) was only kept from want, but never advanced out of the same.

The company could not choose but weepe and deplore the alteration of fortune; she could not choose but smile, that her vertue was predominant over pas-

sion: they exclaimed against the cruelty of her lord, she disclaimed the least invective against him: they wondred at so great vertue and patience, she resolved them they were exercises befitting a modest woman: they followed her with true love and desires to doe her good, she thanked them with a true heart, and request to desist from any further deploring of her estate.

By this time they approched the house, and the poore old man, Janicola, acquainted with the hurli-burly, came out to see what the matter was. And finding it was his daughter in her smocke, and in so honourable a company, bemoaning her distresse, he quickly left them all unspoke unto, and ran in for those poore robes, which were formerly left in the house; with which hee quickly arayed her, and told her before them all, that now shee was in her right element, and kissing her bad her welcom. The company was as much astonished at his moderation, as at her constancie, wondring how nature could bee so restrained from passion, and that any woman had such grace to be so gracious; in which amaze, not without some reprehension of fortune, and their lords cruelty, they left her to the poverty of the cell, and returned themselves to the glory of the palace, where they recounted to the Marquesse the strangenesse of the businesse, and the manner of the accidents, and shee continued in her first moderation and indefatigable patience, the poore father onely laughing to scorne the miseries and sodaine mutabilitie of humane

condition, and comforting his daughter in her well-begun courses of modesty and reposednesse.

Not long after approached the Countesse of Paniche, or, if you will, Dutchesse of Bologna, with her glorious company and beautifull lady, sending word before hand that she would be at Saluss such a day: whereupon the Marquesse sent a troope to welcome her, and prepared the court for her intertainment; the bruit of which yet had not so equall a passage, but divers contrarious opinions thus bandied themselves: some absolutely condemned the inconstancie of the lord, others deplored the misfortune of the lady, some repined to see a man so cruell against so great worthinesse, others exemplified her praises to all eternitie; some were transported with the gallant youth and comelinesse of this new bewtifull virgine, others presumed to parallell the faire Grisel, but that shee had stepped a little before her in yeeres; some harped upon her great nobilitie and high lineage, others compared the former wifes vertue and true wisdom; some excused their lord, by the love to his countrey, others excused the lady by the nature of the adversitie, untill the approach of the faire virgine and the young noble man in her company, extinguished all former conceits, and set them to a new worke, concerning this spectacle, wherein the young lady and her brave brother had such pre-eminence. Nor knew the Earle of Paniche himselfe, or any of the company on either side, that they were his owne children by Grisel, but meerely strangers,

and designed for this new mariage. So the great Marquesse made good semblance, and with his accustomed courtlinesse welcomed them all to the palace.

The very next morning (or, if you will, the day before) he sent a messenger for Grisel to come unto him in the very same manner as shee was; who protracted no time, but presently attended her lord: at her approach he was somewhat appalled, but yet setting (as wee say) the best foot forward, hee thus proceeded:

The lady, Grisel, with whom I must marrie, will bee here to-morrow by this time, and the feast is prepared accordingly: now, because there is none so well acquainted with the secrets of my palace, and disposition of my selfe as you, I would have you, for all this base attire, addresse your wisdom to the ordering of the businesse, appointing such officers as is befitting, and disposing the roomes according to the degrees and estate of the persons. Let the lady have the priviledge of the mariage chamber, and the young lord the pleasure of the gallery: let the rest be lodged in the courts, and the better sort upon the sides of the garden: let the viands be plentiful, and the ceremonies maintained: let the shewes bee sumptuous, and the pastimes as it becommeth; in a word, let nothing be wanting, which may set forth my honour, and delight the people.

My lord, saith shee, I ever told you, I took pleasure in nothing but your contentment, and whatsoever might consort to your delight, therein consisted my

joy and happinesse: therefore, make no question of my diligence and duty in this, or any other thing which it shal please you to impose upon me. And so like a poore servant shee presently addressed herselfe to the businesse of the house, performing all things with such a quicknes and grace, that each one wondred at her goodnesse and faire demeanour, and many murmured to see her put to such a triall. But the day of entertainment is now comme, and when the faire lady approached, her very presence had almost extinguished the impression of Grisels worthinesse; for some unconstant humourists gave way to the alteration, not blaming the Marquesse for such a change. But when the strangers were made acquainted with the fortune of Grisel, and saw her faire demeanour, they could not but esteeme her a woman of great vertue aud honour, being more amased at her patience, then at the mutability of mans condition; till at last shee approached the lady, and taking her by the hand, used this specch.

Lady, if it were not his pleasure, that may command to bid you welcome, yet me thinks there is a kinde of over-ruling grace from nature in you, that must exact a respect unto you. And as for you, yong lord, I can say no more, but if I might have my desires satisfied in this world, they should be imployed to wish you well, and to endeavour all things for your entertainment indeed. To the rest I afford what is befitting, desiring them, that if any deficiency amate their expectation, they would impute it either to my ignorance,

or negligence; for it is the pleasure of him, in whose will is all my pleasure, that in all sufficiency you should have regard and suppliment. And so shee conducted them to their severall chambers, where they reposed themselves awhile, till the time of dinner invited them to repast. When all things were prepared, and the solemnity of placing the guests finished, the Marquesse sent for Grisel, and rising in his feet, took her by the hand before them all, erecting his body, and elating his voice in this manner: You see the lady is heere I meane to marry, and the company gloriously prepared to witnes the same; are you therefore contented that I shall thus dispose of my selfe, and do quietly yeeld to the alteration?

My lord, replied she before them all, wherein as a woman I might be faulty, I will not now dispute; but because I am your wife, and have devoted my selfe to obedience, I am resolved to delight in nothing but your pleasure; so that if this match be designed for your good, and determined by your appointment, I am much satisfied, and more then much contented. And for you, lady, I wish you the delights of your marriage, and the honour of your husband, many yeares of happinesse, and the fruits of a chaste wedlock: only, gracious lord, take heed of one thing; that you trie not this new bride as you have done your ould wife; for she is yong, and peradventure of another straine, and so may want of that patience and government, which I, poore I, have endured.

Till this he held out bravely; but nature overcom-

ming resolution, and considering with what strange variety his unkindnesse had passed, hee could not answere a word for teares, and all the company stood confounded at the matter, wondring what would be the end of the businesse, and the successe of the extasie. But to draw them out of their doubts, the next chapter shall determine the controversie.

CHAP. X.

THE ORATION OF THE MARQUESSE TO HIS WIFE, AND THE DISCOVERY OF HER CHILDREN, TO HER GREAT JOY, AND THE CONTENTMENT OF ALL THE COMPANY.

AFTER a little reducement of his passion, and that time and further meditation had disposed his senses to their perfect estate, the Marquesse graciously answered:—

Thou wonder of women, and champion of true vertue! I am ashamed of my imperfections, and tyred with abusing thee. I have tryed thee beyond reason, and thou hast forborne mee beyond modesty: beleieve it therefore, I will have no wife but thy selfe, and when God hath thought thee too good for the earth, I will (if it bee not too much superstition) pray to thee in heaven. Oh! 'tis a pleasure to be acquainted with thy worth, and to come neere thy goodnes maketh a man better than himselfe. For without contro-

versie, except thou hadst beene sent from above, thou couldst never have acted a goddesses part belowe: and therefore, seeing I have used thee so unkindly heeretofore, I protest never to disquiet thee heereafter: and wherein my cruelty extended against thee in bereaving thee of thy children, my love shall now make amends in restoring thy daughter. For this new bride is shee; and this wanton, her brother. Thank this great lady (my sister) for their bringing up, and this man (you knowe him well enough) for his secrecy. Bee not amased at the matter: I have related a truth, and will confirme it on my honour; only sit downe till the dinner is done, and bid the company welcome in this poore attire; for the sun will break through slender clouds, and vertue shine in base array. I could much dilate the matter, but it is time to end, lest the circumstances will never end.

This device of the Marquesses, of kissing her so lovingly, and setting her downe by him so discreetly, did much good; for the company had time to dispute of the miracle, and the yong lady reason to prepare her obedience; which, no sooner was the dinner finished, but shee as soone performed, nothing thought upon but joy at the matter, and wonder at the accident; every one pleased to see such a unity of goodnes, and all delighted to have a businesse so well concluded. But seeing time had unclasped a booke of such jollity, there was now no further disputing, for the ladies flocked about her to attend her into the chamber, where the yong princesse her daughter was as ready

as the best to apparell her ; so that when shee came amongst them againe, she shined like the sun after a tempest, and seemed more glorious, because her continued modesty kept her from all insulting and vaine-glorious bravery.

Thus was the Marquesse invested, as it were, with a new blessednes, and she continued in her ould constancy ; onely admired by every one for her patience and sufferings, and all aplauding their reconcilment, blessing her, and the people proud they had such a lord to obey : especially satisfied when the poore Janicola was advanced to the councell, and made governor of his palace ; wherein hee behaved himselfe so well, that for ten yeares hee still lived as he had beene bred a courtier, and died with the memory of a good report. Grisel lasted thirty yeares after him, and all went to their graves in good time, the country renowned over the world for their admirable government, and famosed for their extraordinary wonder.

Non est ulla difficultas (ut ita dicam) neque passio, neque calamitas dira, cujus non sufferre queat pondus hominis natura.—Euripides Orestei.

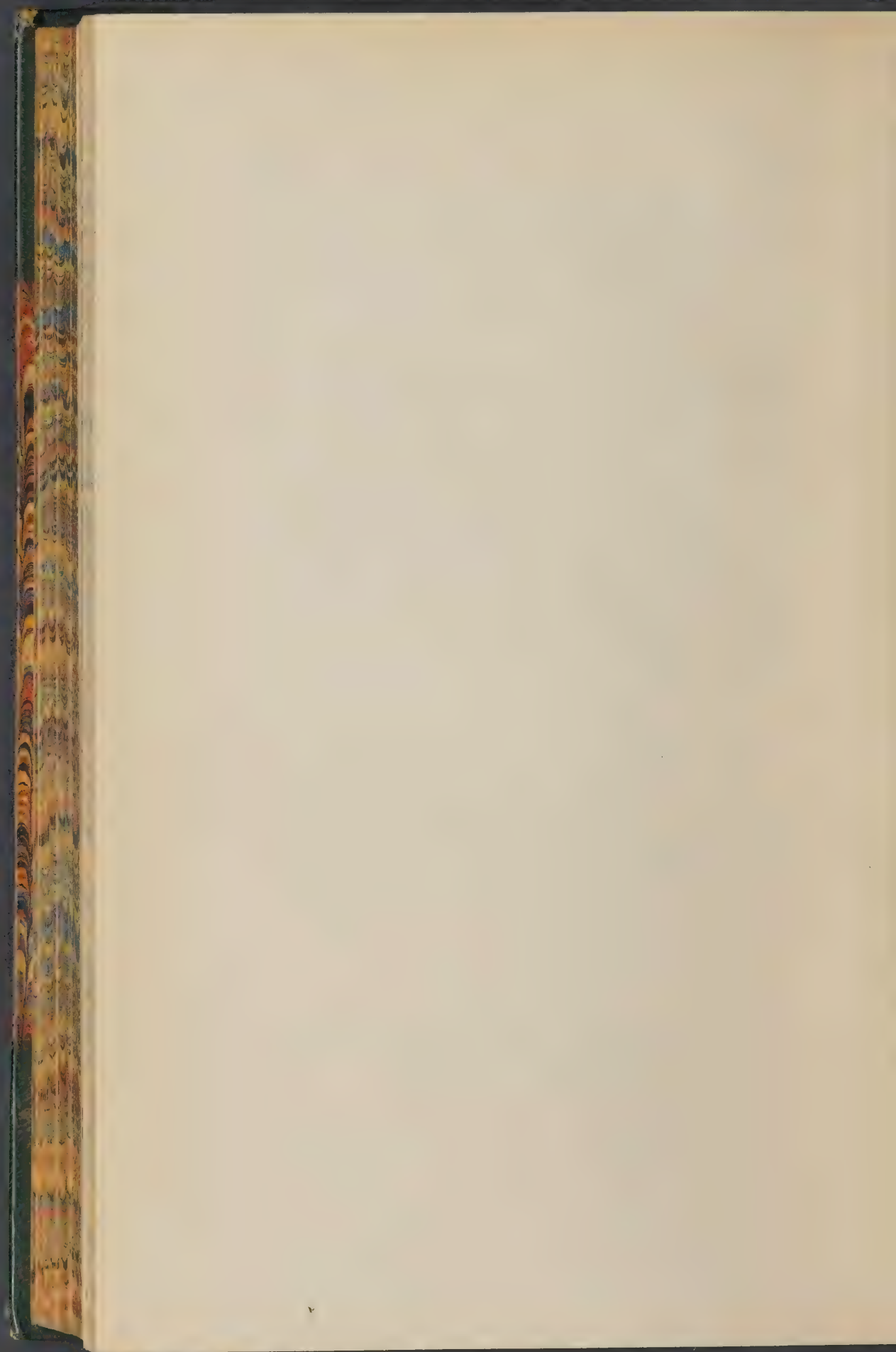
THE PLEASANT
AND SWEET HISTORY OF
PATIENT GRISSELL

SHEWING HOW SHE, FROM A POORE MANS DAUGHTER, CAME
TO BE A GREAT LADY IN FRANCE, BEING A PATTERN
TO ALL VERTUOUS WOMEN.

Translated out of Italian.

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at the signe of the Bible.



THE PLEASANT AND SWEET HISTORY OF
PATIENT GRISSELL, SHEWING HOW SHE
FROM A POOR MANS DAUGHTER CAME TO
BEE A GREAT LADY IN FRANCE: BEING A
PATTERNE FOR ALL VERTUOUS WOMEN.

CHAPTER I.

HOW, AND IN WHAT PLACE THE NOBLE MARQUESSE WAS
DWELLING.

IN the countrey of Salusa, which lyeth neere Italy and France, there lived a noble and wealthy prince, named Gualter, Marquesse and Lord of Salusa, a man of such vertues that the world did ring of: beloved of his subjects for his good parts, that before his dayes, nor since, was very few the like, for his continuall care of his subiects good, and they in their dutifulnesse, sought to out-strip him in love. From his youth his onely exercise was hunting, wherein he tooke such delight, that nothing was more pleasing unto him: withall the subjects loyalty to this worthy prince, in their carefulnesse that such excellent vertues should not faile for want of issue, intreated him by humble petition to

marry, that from his loynes their children might enjoy the like happinesse. This speech thus spoke to the prince drave such love and affection into his mind, that most graciously he made them answer, that when it should please God that hee should see one that he could love, hee most willingly would fulfill their good and honest request. Withall this answer gave them such content, that they earnestly prayed to see that day.

CHAP. II.

OF THE GOOD AND HONEST LIFE OF FAIRE GRISSSEL, AND HER
OLD FATHER JANICOLA.

NERE to the famous city of Saluse, was a poor village named Clue, in the way going to a great and spacious forrest, where the noble Marquesse used daily his pleasure in hunting: the poorer sort got their living, some by spinning, some carding, others by keeping sheep. Amongst the rest of the inhabitants, there was an old man named Janicola, whose wife being dead, shee left him one onely daughter, named Grissell, who, by the countrey manner, was named the faire. These two lived contentidly together; the aged father goes to get wood for fire, the maid makes his bed, gets his breakfast ready against his comming home, drives her sheepe to the common, sets her house in order, and fals to her

ordinary work of spinning: when the old man comes home, she sets his meat, makes much of him, shewes al the obedience that may be to the aged man; he in requital of her love, as an incouragement to all obedient children, powrs out his hearty prayers in her behalf, praying the Almighty God to blesse her, to give her that happiness which belongs to so good a child. No doubt but his petition was heard, for God gave a blessing to her, as you may hear by the happy comming of the Marquesse that way, which may seeme suddenly after.

CHAP. III.

HOW THE MARQUESSE OF SALUSA, RIDING A HUNTING, FELL
IN LOVE WITH THE FAIRE GRISELL.

A noble Marquesse,
As he did ride a hunting
 hard by a forrest side,
A faire and comely maiden,
As she did sit a spinning,
 his gentle eye espide.
Most faire and comely,
And of comely grace was she,
 although in simple attire:
She sung full sweetly,
With pleasant voyce melodiously,
 which set the lords heart on fire.

The more he lookt, the more he might ;
Beauty bread his hearts delight,
And to this comely damsell
then he went :—

God speed (quoth he) thou famous flower,
Faire mistresse of this homely bower,
Where love and vertue
dwel with sweet content.

With comely gesture
And modest mild behaviour,
She bid him welcome then :
She entertaind him
In faithfull friendly manner,
and all his gentlemen.
The noble Marquesse
In's heart felt such a flame,
which set his sences at strife :
Quoth he, faire maiden,
Shew me soone what is thy name,
I meane to make thee my wife.
Grissell is my name, quoth she,
Far unfit for your degree,
A silly maiden,
and of parents poore.
Nay, Grissell thou art rich, he said,
A vertuous, faire, and comely maid ;
Grant me thy love,
and I will aske no more.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE MARQUESSE MARRIED FAIRE GRISSEL, AND HOW THE
LORDS DESIRED HIM TO PUT HER AWAY, BECAUSE SHE
WAS OF SO MEANE A BLOOD.

AT length she consented,
And being both contented,
 they married were with speed;
Her country russet
Was chang'd to silke and velvet,
 as to her state agreed:
And when that she
Was trimly tyred in the same,
 her beauty shined most bright,
Farre staining every
Other faire and princely dame,
 that did appeare in her sight.
Many envied her therefore,
Because she was of parents poore,
And twixt her lord and she
 great strife did raise.
Some said this, and some said that,
And some did call her beggars brat,
And to her lord
 they would her oft dispraise.

O! noble Marquesse,
Quoth they, why dost thou wrong us,
 thus basely for to wed,

That might have gotten
An honourable lady
 into your princely bed?
Who will not now
Your noble issue still deride,
 which shall hereafter be borne,
That are of blood so base,
Borne by the mothers side,
 the which will bring them in scorn.
Put her therefore quite away,
And take to you a lady gay,
Whereby your lineage
 may renowned be.
Thus every day they seem'd to prate
That malic'd Grissels good estate;
Who all this while
 tooke it most patiently.

CHAP. V.

HOW THE NOBLE MARQUESSE HAD TWO CHILDREN BY PATIENT
GRISSELL, HOW HE SENT FOR THEM, AND TOLD HER THEY
MUST BE MURDERED, AND OF HER PATIENCE.

WHEN that the Marquesse
Did see that they were bent thus
 against his faithfull wife,

Whom he most dearely,
Tenderly, and entirely,
 beloved as his life ;
Minding in secret
For to prove her patient heart,
 thereby her foes to disgrace ;
Thinking to shew her
A hard discourteous part,
 that men might pittie her case.
Great with child this lady was,
And at last it came to passe,
Two goodly children
 at one birth she had :
A son and daughter God had sent,
Which did her father wel content,
And which did make
 their mothers heart full glad.

Great royall feasting
Was at these childrens christening,
 and princely triumph made ;
Six weeks together,
All nobles that came thither,
 were entertain'd and staid :
And when all these pleasant
Sportings quite were done,
 the Marquesse a messenger sent
For his young daughter,
And his pretty smiling sonne ;
 declaring his full intent,

How that the babes must murthred be ;
For so the Marquesse did decree.
Come, let me have
 the children, then he said.
With that faire Grissell wept full sore,
She wrung her hands, and said no more,
My gracious lord
 must have his will obey'd.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE GRET SORROW THAT PATIENT GRISSEL MADE FOR
HER CHILDREN.

SHE tooke the babies,
Even from the nursing ladies,
 betweene her tender armes:
She often wishes
With many sorrowfull kisses,
 that she might ease their harmes.
Farewell, farewell
A thousand times, my children deare,
 never shall I see you againe:
'Tis long of me
Your sad and wofull mother here,
 for whose sake both must be slaine.
Had I beene borne of royall race,

You might have liv'd in happy case;
But you must dye
 for my unworthinesse.
Come, messenger of death, (quoth she)
Take my dearest babes to thee,
And to their father
 my complaints expresse.

He tooke the children,
And to his noble master,
 he brought them both with speed;
Who in secret sent them
Unto a noble lady,
 to be brought up in deed.
Then to faire Grissell,
With a heavy heart he goes,
 where she sate mildly all alone:
A pleasant gesture,
And a lovely looke she shewes,
 as if no griefe she had knowne.
(Qd he) my children now are slaine:
What thinks fair Grissel of the same?
Sweet Grissel, now
 declare thy mind to me.
Sith you, my Lord, are pleas'd with it,
Poore Grissel thinks the action fit:
Both I and mine
 at your command will be.

CHAP. VII.

HOW PATIENT GRISSEL WAS PARTED FROM THE NOBLE MAR-
QUESSE, AND SENT TO HER FATHER AGAIN, AND OF A
GREAT MARRIAGE WAS PREPARED THE SECOND
MATCH OF THE MARQUESSE.

My nobles murmur,
Faire Grissell, at thy honour,
 and I no joy can have,
Till thou be banisht,
Both from the court and presence
 as they unjustly crave.
Thou must be stript
Out of thy stately garments all,
 and as thou cam'st to me,
In homely gray,
Instead of bisse and purest pall,
 now all thy cloathing must be :
My lady thou must be no more,
Nor I thy lord, which grieves me sore.
The poorest life
 must now content thy mind.
A groat to thee I must not give
Thee to maintaine while I doe live ;
Against my Grissell
 such great foes I find.

When gentle Grissell
Did heare these wofull tidings
 the teares stood in her eyes,

Nothing she answered,
No words of discontentment
 did from her lips arise.
Her velvet gowne
Most patiently she stripped off,
 her kirtle of silke with the same:
Her russet gowne
Was brought againe with many a scoffe,
 to beare them her selfe she did frame.
When she was drest in this array,
And was ready to part away,
God send long life
 unto my lord (quoth she)
Let no offence be found in this,
To give my love a parting kisse.
With watery eyes,
 farewell, my deare, said he.

CHAP. VIII.

HOW PATIENT GRISSEL WAS SENT FOR TO THE WEDDING, AND OF
HER GREAT HUMILITY AND PATIENCE.

FROM princely palace
Unto her fathers cottage
 poore Grissell now is gone.
Full sixteene winters
She lived there contented ;
 no wrong she thought upon.

And at that time through
All the land the speeches went,
 the Marquesse should married be
Unto a noble lady great,
Of high descent ;
 and to the same all parties did agree.
The Marquesse sent for Grissell faire,
The brides bed chamber to prepare
That nothing therein
 might be found awry.
The bride was with her brother come,
Which was great joy to all and some ;
But Grissell tooke
 all this most patiently.

And in the morning,
When as they should be wedded,
 her patience there was tride :
Grissel was charged
Her selfe in friendly manner
 for to attire the bride.
Most willingly
She gave consent to doe the same ;
 the bride in bravery was drest,
And presently
The noble Marquesse thither came
 with all his lords at his request.
O ! Grissell, I would aske of thee,
If to this match thou wilt agree ?
Methinks, thy lookes
 are waxed wondrous coy.

With that they all began to smile,
And Grissel she replied the while,
God send lord Marquesse
Many years of joy.

CHAP. IX.

HOW THE MARQUESS, BEING MOVED WITH HER PATIENCE,
GAVE HER TWO CHILDREN, WERE FRIENDS, AND
AFTER LIVED IN PEACE.

The Marquesse was moved
To see his best beloved
thus patient in distresse.
He stept unto her,
And by the hand he tooke her ;
these words he did expresse :—
Thou art my bride,
And all the bride I meane to have :
these two thy own children be.
The youthfull lady
On her knees did blessing crave,
her brother as well as she.
And you that envied her estate,
Who I have made my loving mate,
Now blush for shame,
and honour vertuous life.
The chronicles of lasting fame,
Shall evermore extol the name
Of patient Grissel,
my most constant wife.

CHAP. X.

OF THE GREAT FEAST THAT WAS MADE FOR PATIENT GRISSEL,
AND HER CHILDREN, AND OLD JANICOLA.

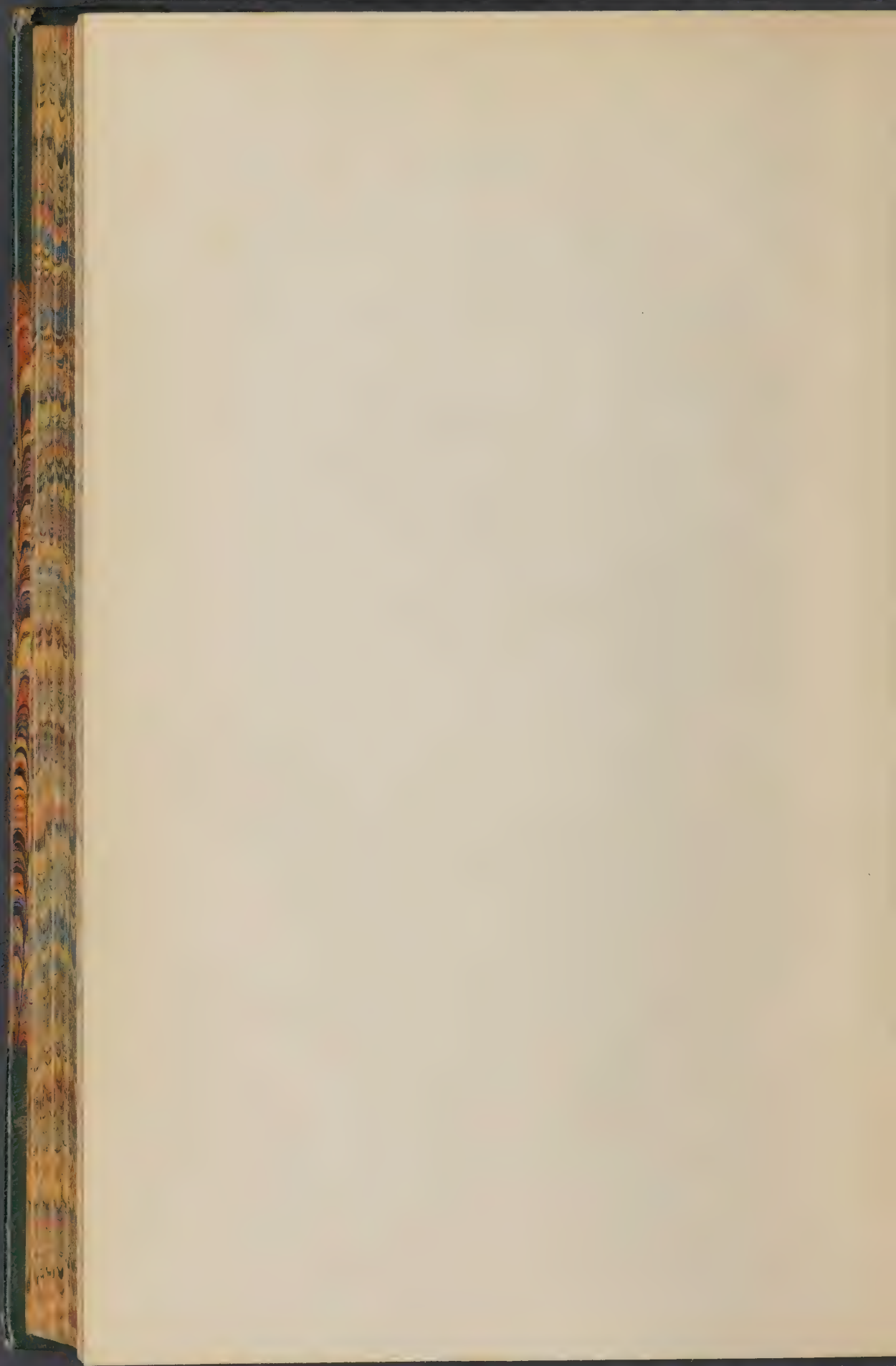
THE lords and gentlemen, being astonished, looked one upon another, and seeing no remedy, but that the noble Marquesse had an unremoveable love upon her, besought her to pardon them of their envy towards her, and to take them into her favour, which she with a modest behaviour promised to doe. The noble Marquesse, seeing all in peace, ordained a great and sumptuous feast, where patient Grissel sate mistresse of the feast; the Marquesse on her right hand, on her left her aged father, old Ianicola; her two children betweene them both, the lords and gentlemen doing them service. This feast continued fourteene dayes, to the comfort of the commons.

When this solemne feast was ended, the Marquesse, to shew his love to his Grissell, made her father one of his counsel, and governour of his palace, where for many yeeres he lived in the love of the whole court. The noble Marquesse, and his faire Grissell, lived almost thirty yeeres, saw their childrens children, and then dyed, beloved and bewayled of their subjects.

CHAP. XI.

THE AUTHORS PERSWASION TO ALL WOMEN IN GENERALL.

THUS you may see by this history, you that are women, the great good which commeth by patience and humility ; for had this vertuous woman bin of a churlish and crabbed disposition, she had lost that great estate which she had, besides the happy love of a worthy and loving husband. Therefore, ye women, as you are helpers for men, and were so created for that use, give no distaste to your loving husbands : and men likewise, be not bitter to your wives, for the world hath not many Grissels ; for man and wife, living lovingly and peaceably in this world, shal dye with a good conscience, and enjoy the happinesse of the world to come, which shall have no end.



NOTES.

- P. 14, l. 18.—*and more INWARD with the Marquesse.*] “Inward” is a common word in our older writers for *intimate*. It is frequently met with in Shakespeare.
- P. 5, l. 14.—*because it will REBOUND.*] Probably we ought to read *redound*.
- P. 6, l. 29.—*and be MORIGEROUS to him.*] A word of rare occurrence in our language. Todd, in his edition of Johnson’s Dictionary, could find no authority for it but Bullokar.
- P. 8, l. 15.—*when they PRETENDED an action*] “Pretended” is here to be taken in the common old sense of *intended*.
- P. 13, l. 30.—*the COLLANAES and chaines.*] So printed in the original: perhaps we ought to read *collars*.
- P. 22, l. 2.—*by CRESSET-LIGHT and bonfires.*] Cresset-lights were used for processions, illuminations, and public festivities at night. Sir T. Hanmer properly derives them from the French *croisette*, because the light, when formerly employed as a beacon, was placed upon a small cross. The most apposite application of “cresset-light” is in *The Three Lords of London*, 1590, where one of the characters speaks of “watches in armour, triumphes, cresset-lights,” for the purpose of expressing popular joy. They are mentioned in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV*, Part I, Act iii. sc. 1.

P. 24, l. 1.—*and that THE apprehension.*] The definite article seems unnecessary here.

P. 28, l. 11.—*to marry HIS paragon.*] We certainly ought to read “to marry *this* paragon.”

P. 38, l. 29.—*if any deficiency AMATE their expectation.*] This sense of the verb “amate” does not seem very usual; to *mate* is to confound, and to *amate* is explained by our lexicographers as to perplex, to discourage.

P. 41, l. 14.—*for the sun will break through slender clouds and vertue shine in base array.*] This resembles in language and sentiment two lines in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act iv. sc. 3:

“And as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,
So honour peereth in the meanest habit.”

P. 47, l. 21.—*Most faire and COMELY.*] The black-letter broadside of this ballad, “printed by and for Alex. Milbourn” *n. d.*, has this line “Most fair and *lovely*,” which seems the preferable reading.

P. 48, l. 4.—*then he went.*] The black-letter broadside reads “then he went *with speed*,” which is clearly wrong.

P. 48, l. 17.—*which set his senses at strife.*] The improved reading of the black-letter broadside here is “*all* at strife.”

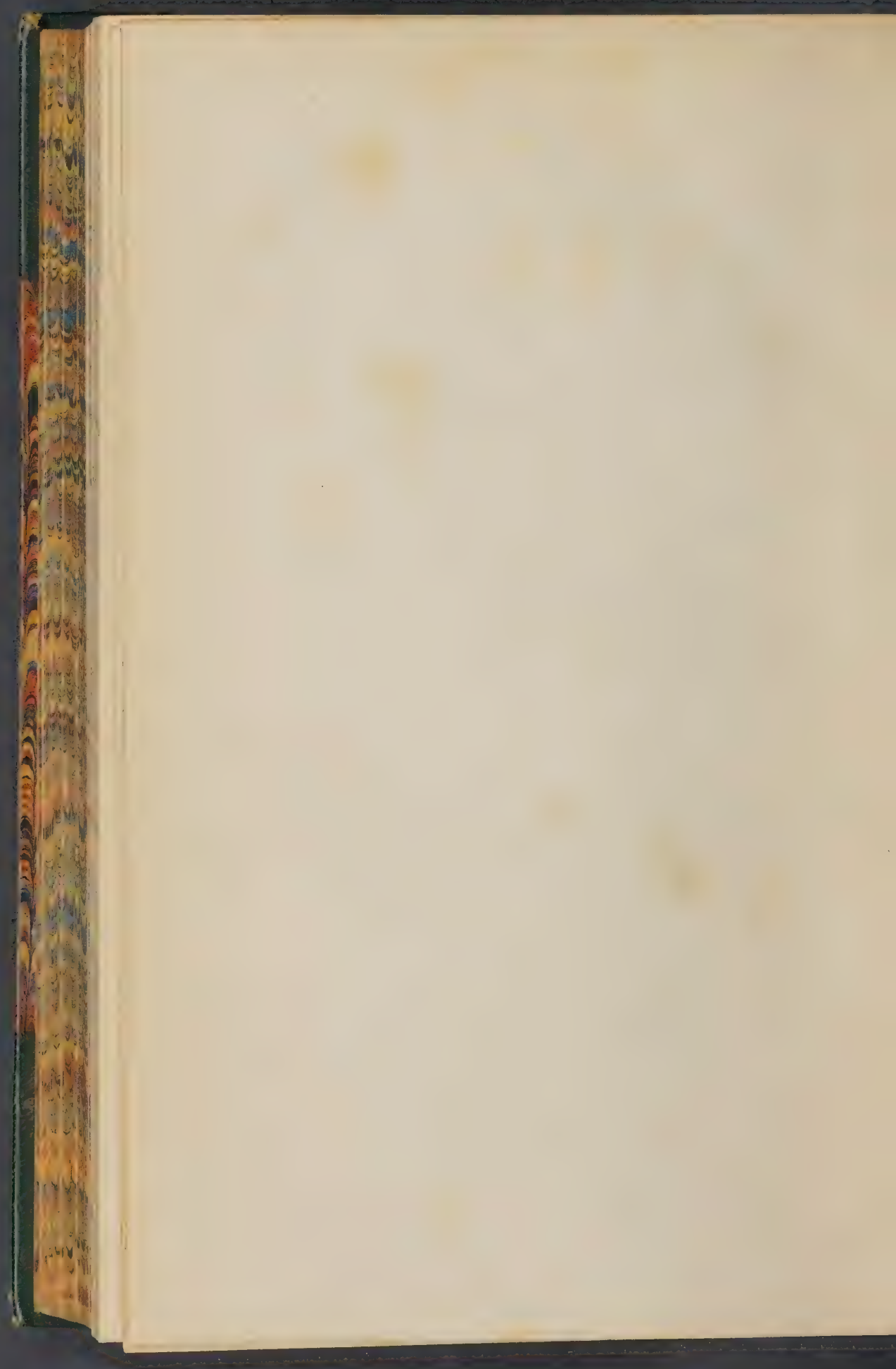
P. 49, l. 16.—*that did appeare in HER sight.*] The black-letter broadside omits “her,” properly as regards the metre.

P. 51, l. 15.—*Which did HER FATHER well content.*] The blackletter broadside gives these lines, no doubt rightly, thus:

“Which did their mother well content,
And which did make
their father's heart full glad.”

- P. 53, l. 10.—*he* BROUGHT THEM BOTH *with speed*.] The black-letter broadside has this line, "*he bore them thence with speed*."
- P. 54, l. 16.—*Instead of* BISSE and *purest* PALL.] Cloth of bisse was a peculiarly rich dress, and *pall* is usually coupled with "purple"—*purple and pall*: like bisse it indicates splendour of habiliment. The black-letter broadside reads *bliss* for "*bisse*," the printer not understanding the word.
- P. 54, l. 22.—*I* MUST *not give*.] The black-letter broadside reads "*I dare not give*."
- P. 55, l. 24.—*Full* SIXTEENE *winters*.] The black-letter broadside says "*Full fifteen winters*."
- P. 56, l. 4.—*Unto a noble lady* GREAT.] The black-letter broadside omits "*great*."
- P. 56, l. 27.—*I* WOULD *aske of thee*.] The black-letter broadside has *will* for "*would*."

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